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## THE RUIN OF GREAT PUBLIC MEN.

*The "Saturday Evening Post" of January 9th contains as its leading article the report of an interview with the President by Samuel G. Blythe. After dealing with a number of subjects, the interviewer asks a question which introduces to Canadian Civil Servants an old friend whose reputation is no less unsavory in the land of the Stars and Stripes than it is under the Union Jack. The interview goes on as follows:—*

"What," I asked, "is the most disagreeable feature of the presidency?"

"Patronage," he replied without a moment's hesitation—"patronage, and the genuine astonishment and resentment of personal friends that I cannot take care of them merely because they are personal friends. Politics, you know, as it is widely considered, consists in taking care of one's personal friends. Now, I should like to do that, love to do it; but I cannot. And I am constantly perplexed at the genuine aggrievement of those friends because I cannot and do not.

"I would willingly take the coat off my back and give it to a friend who needed it. My friends can have anything I have that is mine; but I cannot give them what is not mine. These offices are not mine. They belong to the people. They are the nation's. Merely because a man is a personal friend of mine, or has been something or other that makes him think he is, is not a valid reason for bestowing on him an office that does not belong to me, but is mine only to administer through the proper person selected as the active agent. The obligation incumbent on me, as the distributor for the moment of these offices, is to find efficient men to hold them, not personal friends to hold them and get the emoluments.

"I do not think my generosity or my sense of deep and lasting friendship for my real friends can be questioned; but there is a higher obligation than any personal obligation: that is my obligation to the people of this country, who have put me in this place temporarily to administer their governmental affairs for them, and who demand of me that I shall administer them for the people and not for the individual, even though that individual be myself or some one close to me.

"Moreover," he went on, his voice vibrant with earnestness and sincerity, "it is my firm impression that patronage ruins more potentially great men than any other one political influence. By that I mean that many a man who comes into public life, hampers his true development by his devotion to patronage hunting, and his limitations thereby, more than in any other way. They spend their time running to get a job here and a job there.

"Of course, there is a reason for it, because most of them owe their positions in public life to the work of the men back home, and they feel they must do what can be done for those men, and for their own men—the organization—in order that they may have future and continued success at the polls. But, as my observation goes, many a man in public life has not